

Message Text

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SUBJECT: DECEMBER 22, 1977, IRISH TIMES EDITORIAL ON CALLAGHAN'S
VISIT TO NORTHERN IRELAND, UNDER HEADING: "THE CALLAGHAN
STYLE."

BEGIN TEXT:

EVEN WHEN HE'S TALKING SENSE, MR. JAMES CALLAGHAN MAKES
ALMOST EVERY STATEMENT SOUND TRITE AND SENTENTIOUS. HIS
ASSUMPTION OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, HIS BULLDOZING OF ALL
CONVERSATION AROUND HIM ALMOST SERVE TO SHOW MR. MASON
AS A LIVELY CONVERSATIONALIST. MR. CALLAGHAN IS A MASTER
OF THE OBVIOUS.

THERE IS NOT MUCH ORIGINAL TO SAY ABOUT NORTHERN IRELAND,
OF COURSE. IT HAS BEEN SAID BEFORE THAT THE PROVISIONAL
IRA IS ON THE WANE; THE HOPE HAS BEEN TOLD AGAIN AND
AGAIN THAT THEY MUST GIVE THEIR FULL-HEARTED CONSENT TO
FINDING A POLITICAL SOLUTION, OR WORDS TO THAT EFFECT.
AND WHEN MR. CALLAGHAN SAID YESTERDAY THAT "WE
CANNOT IMPOSE IT (A SOLUTION) FROM WESTMISTER,"
HE WAS ECHOING THE WORDS OF MANY OF HIS PREDECESSORS.

HOW TRUE IS TI? IF BRITAIN DID REALLY WANT TO IMPOSE
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PAGE 02 DUBLIN 02919 231611Z

A SOLUTION -- NOT BY FORCE, BUT BY STEADY PERSUASION
AND ECONOMIC PRESSURE ALLIED TO, SAY, INDUCEMENTS FROM
OUTSIDE THESE ISLANDS -- COULD SOME PROGRESS NOT BE
MADE? THE PRESENT GOVERNMENT IN DUBLIN IS CHARY OF
SMART, SWIFT PLANS FOR A SOLUTION, IT HAS SEEN THE
RELATIVELY MODERATE ADVANCE OF SUNNINGDALE BROUGHT TO
NOTHING BY THE SOLID OPPOSITION OF LOYALIST FORCES --

WHILE THE THEN BRITISH PRIME MINISTER LOST HEART AND GAVE IN.

WHAT SO MUCH OF RECENT HISTORY COMES DOWN TO IS THIS:
IF THE UNIONISTS SAY OF ANY MOVE WHATEVER "WE WON'T
HAVE IT." THEN THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT, THE DUBLIN
GOVERNMENT AND THE MINORITY IN THE NORTH HAVE TO LUMP
IT. THESE THREE ELEMENTS HAVE NO RIGHTS; ONLY UNIONISTS HAVE
RIGHTS.

IT HAS GONE ON A LONG TIME. SOMETIMES IT'S A CASE OF
"WE WON'T HAVE IT," FOLLOWED BY A GRAB FOR ARMS -- AS
IN 1912 AND, AS IN MORE RECENT TIMES, WHEN O'NEILL'S EXIT
WAS HEARALDED BY A SERIES OF PROTESTANT BOMBS. SOMETIMES
IT HAS BEEN BY THE OPERATION OF THE OLD-BOY NETWORK
WITH THE CONSERVATIVES. FOR FIFTY YEARS BRITISH
GOVERNMENTS WERE BLIND AND DEAF TO WHAT WAS GOING ON IN
THE NORTH. (DUBLIN WAS NOT ALWAYS VERY ACUTELY
ATTUNED.) THE UNIONISTS ARE TODAY IN THE FORTUNATE
POSITION OF HAVING THE NETWORK OPERATING WELL FOR
THEM WITH THE LABOUR GOVERNMENT.

THE INTERACTION BETWEEN DUBLIN, LONDON AND BELFAST
IN THIS CENTURY IS A SAD AND SORRY TALE. HOW MANY OF
MR. CALLAGHAN'S COUNTRYMEN WOULD AGREE WITH HIM WHEN
HE SAID THAT "WE ARE DOING ALL WE CAN FOR THIS COUNTRY"
(MEANING NORTHERN IRELAND)?
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PAGE 03 DUBLIN 02919 231611Z

WHAT HE COULD DO IS TO TAKE TO HEART THE LESSON THAT
MR. LYNCH HAS BEEN INSTILLING IN HIM; THAT IT IS TIME TO
SEE A BEGINNING OF THE END OF THE OLD STORY AND THE
OPENING OF A NEW ERA FOR THE INHABITANTS OF THESE
ISLANDS. PATCHING UP THE TRIBAL OUTBURSTS THAT ARE
ENDEMIC IN THE NORTH IS NOT ENOUGH. BRITAIN HAS FACED
SOLUTIONS IN OTHER PARTS OF THE GLOBE; IT IS TIME TO
SHOW STATESMANSHIP OVER IRELAND. END TEXTKRENE

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